

CLIMBING REGULATIONS / ETHICS

- ◆ The use of motorized drills is prohibited throughout the park.
- ◆ Do not remove or disturb any natural or cultural object.
- ◆ Do not deface or alter the natural rock surface.
- ◆ Retreat /rappel slings and bolt hangers should not be visible to the general public. The use of cold shuts and natural-colored webbing will help camouflage rappel stations. Bolt hangers should match the color of the rock.
- ◆ Pets must be on a leash at all times.
- ◆ Park cars only in designated parking areas. Do not block public roads, access roads, or private driveways.

CAMPING REGULATIONS

- ◆ Camping is prohibited within 100 feet of all trailheads and parking areas.
- ◆ Do not camp within 100 feet of the top rim of the cliffs. This is a fragile and easily impacted resource.
- ◆ Camping is prohibited within 100 feet of any cultural or historical site.

HUMAN WASTE

- ◆ In areas where outhouses are not available, choose a spot at least 50 yards from any water source, and well away from trails and the base of climbs. Dig a shallow “cat-hole” about six inches deep, and bury the waste afterwards. Pack out your toilet paper in a “Zip-lock” type bag, and dispose of it properly.

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR

CLIMBERS

Climbing Season

The climbing season at New River extends from April through November. The best months are usually late April to mid-June, and mid-September to late October.

Food and Water

Water is available at the spring on Route 82, one mile past Bridge Buttress, and at Canyon Rim Visitor Center. There are numerous markets and eating establishments in nearby towns.

Showers

Showers can be purchased at many of the private campgrounds in the area. **Please do not bathe in the restrooms at park visitor centers.**

Camping

There are many private campgrounds located within easy driving distance from the climbing areas. Primitive camping is allowed on park property. See the guidelines given under **CAMPING REGULATIONS.**

Private Property

There are many areas of private property within the New River Gorge, including some within the park boundary. Do not trespass on private property!

Parking and Security

Park in designated parking locations—do not block roads or driveways. Always change clothes out of view. For security reasons, do not leave vehicles unattended overnight at parking areas or trailheads. Hide or remove all valuables while climbing, and lock vehicles.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In case of serious injury, call

911

First aid is available at park visitor centers and ranger stations. Emergency medical treatment can be obtained at Summersville Memorial Hospital in Summersville, or Plateau Medical Center in Oak Hill.

A WORD OF WARNING

Climbing is a potentially dangerous activity. A variety of skills and techniques are required to ensure a safe climbing experience. Please seek instruction from qualified sources before venturing onto the cliffs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

New River Gorge National River
P.O. Box 246
Glen Jean, WV 25846
(304) 465-0508



The Access Fund
P.O. Box 17010
Boulder, CO 80308
(303) 545-6772

CREDITS

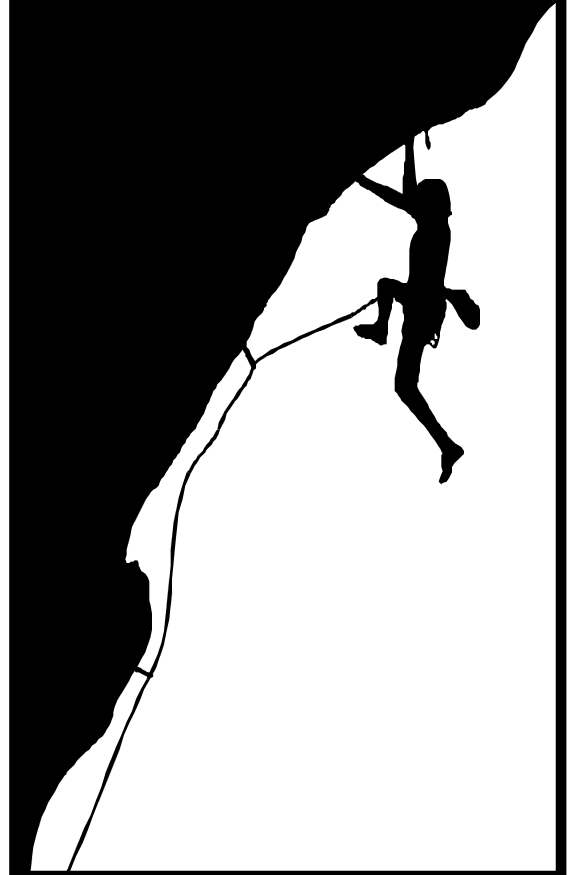
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I M P O R T A N T

CLIMBER INFORMATION

**NEW RIVER GORGE
NATIONAL RIVER**



Welcome
To

NEW RIVER GORGE

National
River



INTRODUCTION

Within the 63,000 acres of New River Gorge National River are over 1200 established rock climbs. “The New” has become one of the most popular climbing areas in the country. Over one million people visit New River Gorge each year, thousands of whom are climbers. With this large number of visitors, park issues develop that can only be solved through everyone’s cooperation.

Briefly, the National Park Service mission is to protect park resources for future generations, while providing opportunities to enjoy these resources at present. This task is obviously a difficult one—balancing resource protection and visitor use. Park managers are concerned about the impacts of visitors and climbers in the areas of soil erosion and compaction, vegetation damage, human waste disposal, cultural resources, and overcrowding. This brochure is devoted to what you, as a climber, can do to limit your impact on New River Gorge and preserve it for future generations.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The mixed hardwood forest of the New River Gorge is a relatively durable environment, but erosion and soil compaction are serious concerns. Once started, the resulting damage is difficult to control. This area receives a large amount of precipitation, and the protection offered by existing trees and ground cover is essential to slowing down the process of erosion.

Use existing trails whenever possible, and choose access trails that avoid steep slopes and drainage areas. Never cut down or damage trees, plants, or lichen—either on the approach or at the climbing site. The top of the cliffs is particularly sensitive because of shallow soils and fragile vegetation. Avoid placing rappel ropes directly around trees—this damages the tree and may eventually lead to its death.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

By law, archeological sites and remains may not be removed or disturbed in any way. This includes habitation sites (rock shelters and camp sites), cultural remains (pottery shards, projectile points, etc.), and historic objects (railroad and mining artifacts).

Numerous abandoned mines and mine structures are found in the park, and should not be entered. Mine shafts are prone to collapse, and may be filled with harmful gases. Many buildings and structures are unstable and not safe to enter. Please respect gates and fences in these areas.

PRESERVING CLIMBERS’ FREEDOM

Respect the rights of others. Local residents, as well as other park visitors, have the same right to undisturbed use of the park as you do. Do not block roads or driveways. Car-pool from available parking areas, or use suitable parking sites. Whether on the rock or in the parking lot, try to minimize your presence.

There are many areas of private property within the New River Gorge. Always acknowledge the landowners’ rights. Do not trespass on private land!

Try to leave the rock and the environment in its natural condition. Avoid placing permanent protection (bolts, pins, fixed nuts) except when absolutely necessary. When used, permanent protection should be painted to match the color of the rock. Consider leaving routes for top roping, and check with other climbers before establishing new routes.

Support projects that help all climbers be more aware of and responsive to climber impact issues. Climbers depend on access to national parks to pursue their sport. If we use our public lands responsibly, and support the agencies who manage them, we can further preserve our climbing environment. As an individual, you can contribute by taking part in volunteer cleanups and trail maintenance, and working with

organizations such as the Access Fund, whose primary function is to preserve access to climbing areas around the country. The Access Fund is assisting New River Gorge National River’s program to improve climber approach trails, install additional outhouses, and address other climber concerns.



CONCLUSION

Climbing at New River Gorge is a special experience. A little respect for the environment, other climbers, and other park visitors will go a long way toward assuring continued access and enjoyment of the area. Please follow the practices outlined in this brochure, which are designed to reduce impacts on this unique park.